

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 097633

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:NATO EEC XF

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST BRIEFING FOR EC AND NATO

REFS: (A) DUBLIN 649; (B) STATE 79402

1. DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES EC DESIRE BE HELPFUL ON MIDDLE EAST AND WE WANT TO KEEP OUR EC COLLEAGUES AS FULLY INFORMED AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, OUR MIDDLE EAST POLICY REVIEW IS NOT YET COMPLETED AND WE HAVE BEEN OBLIGED TO DEFER NATO CONSULTATIONS UNTIL LATE MAY. ACCORDINGLY, YOU MAY TELL DORR THAT WHAT WE CAN SAY AT THIS TIME FOR TRANSMISSION TO POLITICAL DIRECTORS IS SOMEWHAT GENERAL. PLEASE PASS TO DORR THE ASSESSMENT, WHICH FOLLOWS IN PARAGRAPHS 3 - 6.

2. FOR AMBASSADOR BRUCE FROM SISCO. SINCE DISPATCH OF REFTEL B, EC NINE HAVE ASKED FOR US ASSESSMENT OF MIDDLE CONFIDENTIAL

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EAST DEVELOPMENTS, INDICATING THEY WISH TO BE HELPFUL. IN RESPONSE, WE HAVE PREPARED GENERAL ANALYSIS FOR USE BY EMBASSY DUBLIN IN BRIEFING IRISH FOREIGN OFFICE WHICH WILL BRING OUR VIEWS TO ATTENTION OF EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS.

YOU MAY ALSO WISH TO DRAW ON PARAGRAPHS 3, 4 AND 5 IN DISCUSSIONS WITH PERMREPS, SHOULD YOU BELIEVE THEM TO BE

USEFUL, NOTING THAT WE ANTICIPATE CONSULTATION ON MIDDLE EAST AT FORTHCOMING NATO SUMMIT.

3. USG STILL IN PROCESS OF MAKING AN OVERALL REASSESSMENT OF ITS POLICY TOWARD MIDDLE EAST AND, AS PRESIDENT INDICATED IN SPEECH TO CONGRESS, ALL OPTIONS ARE BEING EXAMINED AND REMAIN OPEN. ONLY DECISION THAT HAS BEEN MADE WAS PRESIDENT FORD'S STRONG REAFFIRMATION OF HIS DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE AN ACTIVE US ROLE TO HELP BRING ABOUT PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. IT IS HIS INTENTION TO MAINTAIN THE POSITION THAT US INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST WILL NOT PERMIT THE US TO STAND ASIDE FROM THE AFFAIRS OF THAT AREA.

4. THOUGH WE DO NOT WANT NEEDLESSLY TO REHASH THE PAST, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR POLITICAL DIRECTORS AS A GROUP TO HAVE OUR ANALYSIS OF MARCH NEGOTIATIONS. IMMEDIATE FOCUS WAS ON ACHIEVING FURTHER STEPS TOWARD ADDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL AND PEACE BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL. IT WAS UNFORTUNATELY NOT POSSIBLE IN COURSE OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS TO RECONCILE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PARTIES ON CERTAIN KEY ISSUES, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR ISRAEL'S DESIRE TO MOVE TOWARD AN END OF BELLIGERENCY IN RETURN FOR FURTHER WITHDRAWAL AND EGYPT'S NEED TO RECOVER POSSESSION OF SINAI OIL FIELDS AND TO HAVE ISRAEL WITHDRAW FROM THE PASSES. IN OUR VIEW, NEGOTIATIONS COULD NOT BE CONCLUDED BECAUSE BOTH SIDES REACHED THE LIMITATIONS OF THEIR POLITICAL POSSIBILITIES. ISRAELIS FACED THE DILEMMA THAT ANY STEP TOWARD A SETTLEMENT IS INHERENTLY ASYMMETRICAL, SINCE ISRAEL MUST GIVE UP TERRITORY IN RETURN FOR ESSENTIALLY INTANGIBLE CONCESSIONS BY THE ARABS. OUR POSITION WAS THAT WHILE NO AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND AN ARAB NEIGHBOR CAN BE BASED ON ABSOLUTE EQUITY, WHAT WAS TO BE GAINED WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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CONTINUATION OF A PROCESS THAT WOULD ENABLE US, ISRAEL, AND MODERATE ARABS TO MAINTAIN A CENTRAL POSITION IN NEGOTIATIONS. EGYPTIANS HAD TO CONSIDER EFFECT OF WHATEVER STEP THEY MIGHT TAKE ON OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS WITH AN INTEREST IN THE NEGOTIATION, PARTICULARLY SYRIA.

5. ISSUE USG NOW WEIGHING IS RELATIVE MERITS OF TRYING TO CONTINUE STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS IN SOME FORM OR TURNING TO ALTERNATIVE OF ATTEMPTING TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS ON OVERALL SETTLEMENT. UNTIL SUSPENSION OF NEGOTIATIONS, WE BELIEVED PARTIES TO THE NEGOTIATIONS SAW ADVANTAGE IN STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS. HOWEVER, THAT ASSUMPTION IS UNDER RE-EXAMINATION NOW. AS OUR OWN DECISION-MAKING

PROCESS PROGRESSES, WE WILL BE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE
VIEWS OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES. IT IS NOT CLEAR AT THIS
POINT EXACTLY WHEN THE REASSESSMENT WILL HAVE PRODUCED A
FIRM VIEW OF A NEW COURSE OF ACTION.

6. REGARDING EC ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORTS, THIS
IS SUBJECT WHICH WE FEEL WILL NEED TO BE DISCUSSED AFTER
OUR OWN REASSESSMENT, AS WELL AS ANY REVIEWS BEING
CONDUCTED BY THE PARTIES, ARE COMPLETED.

KISSINGER

CONFIDENTIAL

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